

CHELSEA POLICE DEPARTMENT

TARGETING CRIME

&

SUPPORTING THE

COMMUNITY

**a 14-point plan for increased public safety
offered by
City Manager Jay Ash and Police Chief Frank Garvin
April, 2004**



CHELSEA POLICE DEPARTMENT
“TARGETING CRIME AND SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY”
a 14-point plan for increased public safety
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- II. Fund Chelsea Housing Authority Mobile Surveillance Equipment**
- III. Expand the Traffic Unit**
- IV. Establish a Full-Time Gang Officer**
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I. Bid, Purchase and Installation of Mobile Surveillance Equipment

i. Description:

The City will seek to utilize new technologies to augment traditional law enforcement activities by issuing bids for the acquisition of mobile surveillance equipment. The cameras could be hard-wired or wireless and feed to a computer server at CPD headquarters. The cameras would allow for instant viewing of targeted areas and the recording of activities to be reviewed up to a month or more later. Instant viewing would be of value when immediate observations are necessary or helpful, for example when a call comes in regarding a disturbance in Bellingham Square. Recorded viewing could be especially valuable in reconstructing crime-scenes and identifying suspects days following the report of a crime.

Current technology typically provides for only a day or two recorded history of a scene. By feeding into a dedicated computer server, the new technology greatly expands the memory available. Features of the technology provide for enhanced clarity and joystick control. The view-ability would provide for improved evidence and, therefore, better prosecution, although a caution is that the City will simultaneously undertake a review of case law relating to the use of such evidence.

A further benefit allows for authorized users to access the surveillance feed from computers offsite. The technology may also allow for CPD to pick-up live feed from private security cameras, should a cooperation agreement exist to allow for such access.

In addition to providing instant viewing and a better record, the cameras should serve as a deterrent to crime in areas where the cameras are advertised to be operating.

ii. Locations:

The cameras would be “fixed” in certain locations and “mobile” for additional flexibility to cover additional locations. As many as 20 cameras or more could be purchased. Certainly at least one camera would be in a fixed location at Bellingham Square.

iii. Types of Crime to be Targeted:

The cameras would provide CPD with a great deal of flexibility in addressing a wide range of criminal activity, including: drugs, graffiti, vandalism, gangs, assault, prostitution, illegal dumping and homeland security.

iv. Cost/Sources of Funds:

The City will request bids and will undertake a full cost/benefit analysis to support the required spending. The two areas of cost that are important are the initial acquisition and the annual maintenance costs. Funding, perhaps as much as \$250,000 for the first year, will be sought from the City's operating reserves after the bid process has been completed. Additional equipment or money to support the initial purchase may be provided for through regional grants for homeland security.

v. Implementation Schedule:

The City will seek bids in May and seek to make a selection of a vendor by June. Once a vendor is selected a timetable for acquisition and installation will be developed from there.

II. Fund Chelsea Housing Authority Mobile Surveillance Equipment

i. Description:

To augment the existing use of cameras at Chelsea Housing Authority developments, the City will commit \$100,000 towards a \$229,000 project to install eighty (80) high resolution, vandal resistant cameras at the Innes Family Housing Development on Central Avenue. Innes is a 94-unit, state funded family housing development owned and managed by the Chelsea Housing Authority. The cameras are designed to be placed indoors and outside, in hallways, public areas, lobbies, laundry rooms, all entrances, the dumpster and trash areas and playgrounds. Similar cameras are already installed at the Margolis Apartments, the Buckley Apartments, the Scrivano Apartments and the Mace Apartments. CHA's experience has been that cameras in each of the developments have contributed to a significant reduction in crime and promoted other quality of life improvements for CHA residents and their neighbors in abutting properties.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funding:

The City's \$100,000 contribution to the \$229,000 project will be funded through the City's Massachusetts Small Cities Program allotment, should the State's Department of Housing and Community Development approve the application. CHA has committed to fund the remaining project costs through its operating budget.

iii. Implementation:

The City has submitted the MSCP grant application in timely fashion and awaits word from DHCD.

III. Expand the Traffic Unit

i. Description:

The City established a Traffic Unit within CPD in 2001. That four-member specialized unit has had a dramatic impact on motor vehicle enforcement. However, the City believes that an expanded Traffic Unit will lead to even further gains, especially during evening and early morning hours. Presently, the existing unit works four day and one nighttime shift. The expanded Traffic Unit, which will include the assignment of three additional officers, will allow for regular coverage during those evening and earlier morning hours.

The expanded Traffic Unit will result in the hiring of three new police officers to backfill the new unit positions filled by existing members of the force. As has been the practice of the Police Chief, the new Traffic Unit officers will be selected from interested candidates based upon performance criteria. Each of the officers selected will be a patrolman, meaning that one superior officer (a Lieutenant) and six patrolmen will comprise the fully staffed new unit.

The specialized unit will also augment police visibility, allow for late night public park closures, provide an additional resource for zero-tolerance efforts and enhance homeland security and crisis management needs.

ii. Types of Violations to be Targeted:

In addition to traditional motor vehicle violations, like speeding and stop signs, the expanded Traffic Unit will allow the City to continue to emphasize the control of illegal truck traffic through the city's neighborhoods. Additional activities could include regular sweeps in neighborhoods for unregistered vehicles and enforcement of commercial parking bans.

iii. Cost/Sources of Funds:

Based upon the City's experience with the existing Traffic Squad, the annual costs to expanding the unit should be revenue neutral, as the revenues from ticketing should offset the increased manpower costs. Additionally, it is possible that federal funding may be available to offset the costs of new hires over a three-year period. The City will apply for such funding.

iv. Implementation Schedule:

Beginning June 1st, the City will perform expanded Traffic Unit activities on an overtime basis. The desire is to undertake the nighttime enforcement during the summer months, when extended daylight, no school, and dry roadway conditions can combine to increase the likelihood of pedestrian injury or death as a result of speeding and other motor vehicle violations.

Concurrently, new hires will undergo academy and field training to permanently backfill the vacancies created by the expansion of the unit. It is anticipated that the new hires will be available in (March) to do so, at which time no additional overtime is anticipated for the regular activities of the expanded Traffic Unit.

IV. Establish a Full-Time Gang Officer

i. Description:

The City is at the forefront of managing gang activity. It is important to note that the statement reflects the success of the current Gang Unit, but also takes into account the substantial contributions of other law enforcement entities, including the State Police, Boston Police Department, Suffolk County Sheriff's Office and the US Attorney's Office. Also contributing locally are community-based organizations, most notably ROCA.

The Gang Unit is a specialized unit. Although six officers currently staff the unit, none of those officers focus exclusively on anti-gang activities. The unit staffing fluctuates, depending upon need and resources.

The City, through CPD, seeks to be further proactive and increasingly more aggressive on addressing local gang activities. While ultimately CPD would wish to eliminate gang activity locally, continued and better suppression is an important goal.

From a manning position, there is one, half-time gang officer, with the additional officers assigned to the unit on an overtime basis. The half-time gang officer also fills a role as a half-time member of the Criminal Investigation Division. One new hire will allow for the expansion of the half-time gang officer into a full-time position, as well as the expansion of the half-time CID position into a full-time position.

ii. Why a Full-Time Position:

The desire to expand the gang officer position to full-time is not a result of or concern that local gang activity is increasing. Instead, the hiring would allow CPD to more effectively coordinate local anti-gang initiatives, better promote anti-gang activities and extend its participation in regional efforts. The latter is important to note, as anti-gang programming increasingly requires a multi-jurisdictional approach.

iii. Cost/Sources of Funds:

A new hire will cost approximately \$50,000, depending upon fringe benefits. Half of that cost would be associated with this initiative, with the other half

covering the expansion of the CID position (described below). Initially, \$6,000 will be requested from the City's operating reserve to cover personnel costs of the new hire until the new fiscal year. For FY'05, the cost of the new hire will be included in CPD's annual budget appropriation.

iv. Implementation Schedule:

A new hire will be sent to a training academy in July. Following completion of the academy, the new hire will be available at the completion of field training, sometime in March of 2005. Once the new hire completes the field training, the full-time gang officer position will be filled.

V. Open a Gang Task Force Substation

i. Description:

CPD has opened a Gang Task Force Substation in the Innes Family Housing Development, a Chelsea Housing Authority property. The gang unit will use the base of operations to coordinate enforcement activities as well as hold regular meetings with residents. The establishment of such an office away from police headquarters is meant to increase the gang unit's presence in the community, as well as to encourage youth and others to feel more comfortable in communicating with law enforcement professionals away from a headquarters that can be an intimidating environment. The office is made possible through a collaboration with CHA and the North Suffolk Gang Task Force, including the State Police and the Boston Police Department.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funds:

Grant funding and matching funds from CHA have been used to fund the initiative.

iii. Implementation Schedule:

The substation opened last month.

VI. Undertake a Gang Activity Crime Analysis

i. Description:

CPD seeks to identify geographic areas and specific persons involved with gang activity and other crimes within the city. Through analysis of existing crime data, CPD will develop a list of repeat offenders and locations, and prioritize the same for intensive law enforcement activities. A preliminary analysis of crime data and a test of the model used to support the theories behind the targeting of individuals and locations have proven to be successful. CPD wishes to now undertake a

review of the last twelve months of data, and then use the results to engage a variety of law enforcement agencies in additional enforcement activities, as well as community-based organizations in support programming.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funds:

Initial funding was provided through the Weed & Seed Program. The School Department will provide additional funding. Approximately \$10,000 will be spent in total to undertake the analysis.

iii. Implementation:

Immediately.

VII. Backfill Criminal Investigation Division

i. Description:

The City will backfill a position left vacant by a retirement this past July. In order to cover the vacancy, CPD has utilized a half-time investigator. However, given the priority of CPD and the Suffolk County District Attorney, especially on matters involving domestic violence and sexual assault, the City will add another member to CID. In effect, the creation of the additional position allows for the half-time gang officer to become full-time and the half-time CID backfill to be restored to full-time.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funds:

Half of a \$50,000 cost to hire a new officer would be assigned to this initiative. As noted above, the other half of the entire cost is attributable to the hiring of a full-time gang officer. This position will be provided for in the FY'05 budget.

iii. Implementation Schedule:

The position will be provided for in the FY'05 budget.

VIII. Create the Special Tactical Operations Program

i. Description:

CPD will undertake a Special Tactical Operations Program (STOP) to target local and regional resources on pressing crime issues. Special operations often require lead-time for investigations and the coordination of several law enforcement departments. CPD will strive to undertake STOP initiatives on a monthly basis.

ii. Types of Violations to be Targeted

STOP will focus on drug, alcohol and prostitution activities, as well as general warrant sweeps and zero tolerance initiatives.

iii. Cost/Sources of Funds:

Costs for special operations can vary, as well as the source of funding. Weed & Seed, anti-gang grants and drug forfeiture money will be among the sources of funding used to conduct buys and pay for any overtime utilized in undertaking special investigations and/or assembling a STOP team to carry out the actual operation.

IX. Address Motor Vehicle Theft and Fraud

i. Description:

Many factors contribute to the high cost of auto insurance in communities like Chelsea. While CPD seeks to reduce accidents through enforcement of speeding, stop sign and other motor vehicle laws, two other major factors will be addressed by CPD as a whole.

To reduce motor vehicle theft, CPD will re-energize its program to distribute “The Club” to owners of high theft models. Adding to the outreach that has already occurred, CPD will strive to contact every local owner of a high theft model to inform them of the free program. CPD will also focus on auto theft through a cooperative initiative with Attorney General Tom Reilly.

Again with the assistance of Attorney General Reilly, CPD will attack fraud, both in alleged damage to vehicles and alleged injuries to individuals. While statistics are difficult to compile, an initial analysis performed by CPD suggests that more vehicle damage and injuries are reported locally than might otherwise be expected. If fraud is happening, one bi-product is an increasing of auto insurance rates, as the awards paid would have a negative impact on the experience rating in the community.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funding:

No significant appropriations will initially be required.

iii. Implementation:

A strategy for “The Club” distribution is being developed. CPD is in contact with the AG’s office on all other matters.

X. Hire a Weed & Seed Executive Director

i. Description:

Weed & Seed is a federal program of the US Department of Justice and co-coordinated on the local level by the US Attorney's Office. The program seeks to address areas of concern and advance initiatives in law enforcement ("weeding") and community development ("seeding"). The local Weed & Seed initiative brings together law enforcement and community-based organization leaders, and provides for programs ranging from anti-gang enforcement activities to Community Schools programming.

The City will reorganize the Weed & Seed structure, placing ultimate responsibility for the programming under the direction of CPD. This focus will therefore place additional emphasis on weeding activities, and provide for seeding through a community policing approach.

Weed & Seed will be managed locally by an internal steering committee comprised of representatives from CPD, the Health & Human Services Department and the City Manager. Externally, the Weed & Seed Committee will be re-energized and inclusive of a number of community stakeholders and regional law enforcement professionals.

In order to facilitate the program, Weed & Seed will seek to hire a professional Executive Director who has experience in both law enforcement and community development.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funding:

Salary and benefits for the Executive Director will cost \$50,000. Additional programming will require approximately \$200,000. Funding should be provided by a federal grant.

iii. Implementation:

To support the overall program, including the hiring of an Executive Director, the City will submit a grant application to US DOJ at the end of April.

XI. Complete Accreditation

i. Description:

CPD will make a final push towards achieving "accreditation" in 2004. The voluntary process, which is based upon national standards adopted by the Commission on Accreditation and Law Enforcement Agencies, establishes mandatory standards in the areas of police management, administration, operations and support services. Under continuing evaluation are operations, policies & procedures and rules & regulations.

ii. Attainment of Certification:

CPD achieved “certification” in 2003. CPD successfully met each of 151 standards in critical practice areas, and, in doing so, became one of only 15 municipal departments in the commonwealth to be so recognized.

iii. Cost/Sources of Funding:

No additional costs are anticipated.

iv. Implementation:

A change in oversight on the state level regarding the accreditation process has temporarily slowed local accreditation. The oversight issue appears to be resolved, with the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police stepping up to take charge of the program. That leadership decision made, the local accreditation appears to be on track and nearing a successful end. CPD is optimistic that an award of accreditation will take place by the fall of 2004.

XII. Relocate and Expand of E-911

i. Description:

The administration of the City’s emergency communications operations is being moved from CPD to the Office of Emergency Management (OEM). The change in responsibility will allow CPD to focus on more core policing issues and provide E-911 with the benefit of communication and emergency management experience held by OEM. The physical relocation of E-911 will provide an independent identity for the operation, while also eliminating the impact of a variety of potential distractions that can be found in a bustling police headquarters. Technology will remain at the police headquarters to provide an important back-up to the City’s E-911 capabilities.

On the personnel side, the City will expand the number of personnel in the unit to insure proper staffing levels to maintain the critical delivery of emergency communications services. One full-time and three part-time positions have been created to accomplish this goal.

ii. Cost/Sources of Funding:

An annualized increase to the City’s operational budget for salaries and expenses could equal as much as \$250,000. The actual cost is still under review and will be presented as part of a new Emergency Management departmental budget for FY’05. Final transitional costs are being determined and will be presented to Council for an ’04 appropriation from the City’s operational reserves.

iii. Implementation:

Administrative responsibility transferred to OEM this past March. The physical relocation of the E-911 staff from CPD headquarters to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will take place in July.

XIII. Support the Suffolk County District Attorney Family Justice Center

i. Description:

An initiative of Suffolk County District Attorney Dan Conley, the City will fully support the establishment of the Family Justice Center in Suffolk County. DA Conley's FJC will focus "one-stop" access to law enforcement and support agencies for crime victims. Currently, a victim must travel to multiple, often-inconvenient locations and retell an incident story over and over again, no matter how difficult that story may be. Victim/witness advocates are not always available to provide direction and counsel at each location. In addition to the inconveniences of travel and coordinating appointments, basic needs, such as childcare, can complicate the process and sometimes lead to crime going unreported or recurring.

The City, through CPD, is pledging to support the initiative through advocacy, education and staffing. Regarding the latter, CPD officers will be available on an as needed basis to travel to the Family Justice Center (on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston) to reduce the inconvenience and facilitate the process of addressing victim/witness issues.

XIV. Facilitate the Establishment of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Training Center

i. Description

Through the efforts of Suffolk County Sheriff Andrea Cabral, in cooperation with the Executive Office of Public Safety, the Department of Capital Asset Management and the City, a training center for law enforcement personnel will be created in the former temporary police station used by CPD on Crescent Avenue. The facility will be operated and utilized primarily by personnel of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office. However, the facility will be a resource for the training needs of CPD, as well as serving as a law enforcement presence in an underserved area of the community.